Benes Broadcast to Czechs Crosses Up V Drive

President-in-Exile Appeals to Homeland to Stop Sabotage Strikes . . . Czech Puppet to Die

By SELWYN JAMES

A Nazi court in Prague sentenced Alois Elias, Czech puppet premier, to deatl yesterday. The charge was "preparation for treason." In less than a week 10(Czechs have been executed, 256 arrested and turned over to the Gestapo in ; campaign to stamp out sabotage and anti-Nazi revolution.

That was the main item from Europe's V front. It came as no surprise. Bu from the exiled Czech Government came the biggest—and most disappointing—piece of ill-timed advice to the Czech people since the start of the V campaign.

President Eduard Benes, broadcasting to his homeland from Britain, appealed to the Czechs to refrain from strikes and hasty demonstrations lest they "prematurely" lay themselves open to terrible reprisals by "cynical murderers who stop at nothing."

Benes, speaking in a quiet, unemotional voice, said:

"Be cautious and calm. Do not let yourselves be enticed into anything."

The fact that the BBC had done the enticing escaped President Benes. What he is doing is asking the Czechs to pay no attention to the nightly broadcasts from London—the V-for-Victory program broadcast in all European languages. The British Government, through its official medium, the BBC, has been urging Czechs, French, Poles, Belgians, Dutch, Luxembourgers and every other Nazi-conquered people to sabotage, strike, demonstrate and kill as many German soldiers as possible.

And yesterday, Prime Minister Churchill sent Sir Walter Monckton, director-general of the Information Ministry, off to Moscow to organize an Anglo-Soviet propaganda campaign to *encourage* the growing discontent in German-occupied countries.

Churchill realizes the importance of strikes in Czechoslovakia. What could be more valuable, for instance, than a big strike at the Skoda armament works right now? It's one of the German Army's chief sources of supply.

It's obvious that there's little "premature" about Czech revolutionary activities at a time when the German Army is suffering gigantic losses on the Russian front.

The sabotage has already achieved part of its aim. London reported Tuesday that there had been stoppages in production in Czech factories. If the anti-Nazi terror continues, it's certain that the Germans will be forced to increase their garrison in Czechoslovakia, as they have in Yugoslavia. Moreover, the outbreak has indicated even to Nazi bigwigs in Berlin that there's something rotten in their rule over Europe.

Benes's kind of propaganda, if anybody in Czechoslavokia takes it seriously, coulc throw his people into confusion anc enable the Gestapo to clamp down suc cessfully on their revolution. It unfortunately contributes to a widely held belief that the Czech leaders-in-exile have learned little from the mistakes of their pre-war foreign policy—mistakes that helped Hitler to take over their country.

But what is the explanation of this apparent conflict between Churchill and Benes? News from private sources in London indicates that the British Prime Minister has frequently reprimanded leaders of London's colony of exiled governments for foolish propaganda tactics. Gen. Sikorski, Polish leader in exile, for example, has been asked to stop talking about Poland's "regeneration," which apparently includes Polish rule over German minorities.

Last night's broadcast by Benes probably was made without the knowledge of Churchill. It seems probable that BBC censors, many of whom are anything but expert political propagandists, slipped up.

Other news from the V front.

¶ Travelers arriving in Turkey from Rumania reported that Gen. Antonescu had given up his command on the Russian front as well as his premiership. They said dissidence and sabotage in Rumania were increasing.

¶ Paris police raided the Austerlitz station area in Paris, arresting seven persons and seizing arms and explosives, Vichy reported. And Paul Colette, who wounded Pierre Laval, was sentenced to death.